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SENSITIVE
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NSC STAFF FOR SINGH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV PHUM PREL EG](#)

SUBJECT: EGYPT: NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
LAMBASTES GOE'S "HIGHLY CRUEL" APPROACH TO DEMONSTRATIONS;
DETENTIONS OF SCORES OF ACTIVISTS EXTENDED BY GOE
PROSECUTORS

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

11. (SBU) On June 5, the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) issued a statement sharply critical of the GOE's treatment of pro-reform activists. According to the statement, GOE security forces should reconsider their use of "highly cruel security measures used lately against protestors who have legally exercised their right to freedom of opinion and expression."

12. (SBU) The NCHR's board was appointed in 2004 by President Mubarak and it is largely funded by the GOE. Former UN SecGen Boutros Boutros-Ghali heads the NCHR, with former Minister of Information Kamal Aboul Magd as his deputy, and former Ambassador Mokhles Qutb as the Council's Secretary General. Many of the NCHR board members are

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considered supporters of the GOE, but several, including Bahey Eldin Hassan and Hafez Abou Seada, have a record of strong criticism of the GOE's human rights record.

13. (SBU) The GOE has not yet reacted formally to the NCHR report, but coincidentally the Cabinet on June 6 began its formal review of the NCHR's second annual report, which had been issued in March. Independent human rights activists have generally characterized the March 2006 report as less critical of the GOE than the first annual report, which was issued in March 2005. Nevertheless, NCHR coverage of Egypt's problematic 2005 elections did not shy away from highlighting problems, including allegations of fraud and violence against voters.

14. (SBU) Also on June 6, GOE prosecutors renewed the detention orders of 21 secular democracy activists, along with 164 members of the Muslim Brotherhood, all of whom had been detained in April and May in connection with demonstrations in support of judicial independence. Among those whose detentions were renewed on June 6 was blogger and activist Alaa Ahmed Saif Al-Islam. On June 7, prosecutors renewed the detentions of 50 other MB members along with the most high-profile detainees, Mohammad Sharqawy and Karim Shaer, whose May 25 detentions were followed by widely-reported charges of torture and abuse.
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